

Figure 2.12

## Niwot Ridge Geographic Area

6,728 NFS Acres    579 Non-NFS Acres    7,307 Total Acres






### Management Area Prescription Allocation

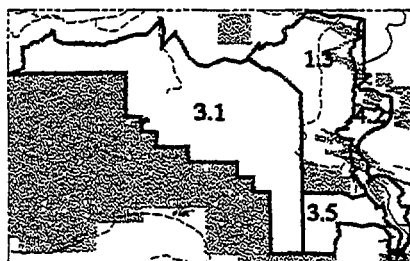
1.3 - Backcountry Recreation	
3.1 - Special Interest Areas - Emphasizing Use or Interpretation	
3.5 - Forested Flora or Fauna Habitats-Limited Management	
4.2 - Scenery	

### NFS Acres

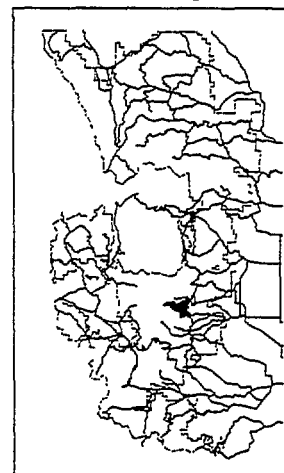
1,548
3,987
622
571

### Legend

-  Not NFS Lands
-  Roads
-  Trails
-  Utility Corridors (0.00 Mi.)
-  Electronic Sites



### Locator Map



Scale 1:200,000  
0 1  
Miles



## NIWOT RIDGE GEOGRAPHIC AREA

### Setting

The area is located west of Colorado Highway 72 between the town of Ward and the Rainbow Lakes Road. It contains a mix of upper montane, subalpine and alpine plant communities consisting of aspen, Douglas-fir, limber pine, lodgepole pine, ponderosa pine, Engelmann spruce, subalpine fir, krummholz, grassy meadows and tundra, wet areas and rock outcrops. Elevations vary from 8,800 to 12,284 feet. Niwot Ridge, the University of Colorado Mountain Research Station, the Niwot Ridge Biosphere Reserve and the Sourdough trail are the key geographic features.

The Niwot Ridge Biosphere Reserve was established by the United Nations as part of the Man and the Biosphere Program in 1979. Several decades of high-altitude alpine research have been conducted on this site.

Road access into the area is provided primarily by the Peak-to-Peak Scenic Byway and the Rainbow Lakes Road. A limited number of secondary roads and a few trails provide access to other portions of the area.

### Goals and Desired Conditions

Emphasize physical and biological high-altitude research, maintenance of existing habitats through natural and research-related processes of both a manipulative and nonmanipulative nature, and backcountry nonmotorized recreation.

Restore, enhance, or maintain mountain grassland and aspen communities. Emphasize old-growth recruitment and retention. Manage vegetation to meet flora and fauna needs with emphasis on aspen retention in the portion of the geographic area outside the Niwot Ridge Biosphere Reserve. The wildland fire management strategies are defined on the *wildland fire management strategy map* enclosed with this document.

Manage areas along the Peak-to-Peak Scenic Byway for heavy use that consists primarily of driving for pleasure and viewing scenery. Maintain the undeveloped character of areas away from existing roads. Manage trails for nonmotorized use. Pursue rights-of-ways for the Niwot Ridge Road and Sourdough Trail.

Manage the Peak-to-Peak Scenic Byway and Sourdough Trail corridors for year-round recreational use. This includes improving recreational opportunities and facilities along the Scenic Byway by constructing a Sourdough-South Trailhead along the Rainbow Lakes Road to provide safe parking at that end of the Sourdough Trail. Reconstruction or relocation of the Sourdough Trail to improve opportunities for year-round nonmotorized use is also anticipated.

The travel management strategy for the area will foster passenger car travel on the Peak-to- Peak Scenic Byway and the Rainbow Lakes Road. Few 4WD opportunities will exist. Most trails in the area will be retained. Decisions on specific roads and trails to keep or close will be made during travel management implementation.

Consolidate landownership patterns. Priorities for consideration are acquisition of isolated mining claims east of the Mountain Research Station and north of the Rainbow Lakes Road.

Manage recreational uses and road and trail networks to reduce erosion or deterioration of riparian areas and watershed conditions. Evaluate road and trail impacts to aquatic and riparian ecosystems during travel management implementation. Recognize the significance of greenback cutthroat trout populations in area streams and manage activities both to protect habitat and populations and to enhance recovery.

### *Management Area 3.1*

Allow natural processes to dominate in this management area. This may include allowing fire to play as natural a role as possible and changing the recommended wildland fire management strategy to perimeter control. Any vegetation management that does occur is primarily for purposes of manipulative research. Insect and disease outbreaks are generally allowed to run their course. Timber harvest is not allowed.

Manage the Biosphere Reserve for limited recreational use that occurs primarily along roads and trails during summer and fall. Minimize recreational impacts to ongoing research according to guidelines in the Niwot Ridge Biosphere Reserve Management Plan. This includes:

- managing the area for day use only
- prohibiting open campfires
- restricting bicycles to existing roads and trails
- restricting hiking to roads and trails on an as-needed basis
- prohibiting pack animals
- requiring pets to be on a leash at all times
- limiting new special-use permits to compatible uses only
- prohibiting the construction of new roads and trails except when necessary to support approved research activities
- discouraging additional recreational use

Hunting is permitted under State Division of Wildlife laws and regulations. Hunting access will be managed to minimize risks to ongoing research projects.

### Standards and Guidelines

1. (ST) Prohibit camping within 100 feet of all lake shores, streambanks, and trails.

### Travel Management Strategy, Niwot Ridge Geographic Area

Management Area	Mode	Existing System	Convert Ways	New Rds/Trls	Extent of Additions	Extent of Obliterations
1.3	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	Y	N	N	N	N
	NMT	Y	N	N	N	N
3.1	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	Y	N	N	N	N
	NMT	Y	N	N	N	N
3.5	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	N	N	N	N	N
	NMT	N	N	N	N	N
4.2	4WD	N	N	N	N	N
	MTR	N	N	N	N	N
	WMT	N	N	N	N	N
	WNM	N	N	N	N	N
	NMT	N	N	N	N	N